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FROM COPPERS TO BUTTONS

or

WERE BENJAMIN AND WILLIAM BUELL THE SAME PERSON?

by
Gary A. Trudgen; Endwell, NY
(RF-37C)

Current numismatic knowledge teaches that Abel Buell, mintmaster of the New Haven, Connecticut mint, had two sons, Benjamin and William, who were also involved in the production of state coppers. Benjamin is credited with minting Connecticut coppers, while William supposedly helped produce Vermont coppers.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Abel Buell's grandson, Abel Buell Moore, related the following story about his Uncle William (1). He claimed that William fled his home town of New Haven, Connecticut to East Rupert, Vermont to escape hostile Indians. The story goes that William had procured a jug of aqua fortis (nitric acid) from a druggist and while returning to his home he was accosted by some Indians. The Indians assumed his jug contained rum and insisted upon drinking it. He tried to convince them that it wasn't rum, but one of the Indians grabbed the jug and swallowed a portion of its contents. Because of his rash behavior, this Indian soon died. His companions, however, wanted revenge and sought every opportunity to take William's life. To escape his assassins, William fled to the farm of his half sister, Mary Moore, in East Rupert, Vermont.

Abel Buell Moore also claimed that when his Uncle William came to East Rupert he brought along original "FUGIO CENT" dies, which he had obtained from his father's mint in New Haven. Furthermore, Moore declared that these dies were used at the East Rupert mint, which had been established in 1785 by Reuben Harmon, Jr. and was located on William's half sister's farm. This claim is doubtful since Harmon was authorized to coin only Vermont coppers and William was probably too young (about 14 years old) to undertake the coinage himself. It is more likely that William carried along a pair of central device punches made by his father, which the Rupert mint then used to prepare the Vermont bust left style dies, known as Ryder 10 and 11 (dated 1786) and Ryder 15 (dated 1787).

At this point, a synopsis of certain Buell family relationships may be helpful. First, Abel Buell Moore was the son of Grove and Mary Moore. Mary was the daughter of Abel Buell and his first wife, Mary Chittenden, whom he married in late 1762 (2). Abel had been apprenticed to his brother-in-law, Ebenezer Chittenden, to learn the silversmith trade. Another brother-in-law, Thomas Chittenden, became the first governor of Vermont in 1778. Abel and Mary's daughter wedded Grove Moore, also from New Haven, Connecticut, and they removed to East Rupert, Vermont in 1780 (3). Second, Abel Buell's first wife died in September 1770 and he was remarried, on March 8, 1771, to Aletta DeVoe. William Buell was born to Abel and Aletta in New Haven in 1772, according to the Buell family history (4).

William left behind very little record in Rupert, probably because he was young and "unattached." It seems likely that he would live with his half sister and brother-in-law, near the mint, although a local history claims he lived south of the mint near the Dorset-Rupert town line (5). William did not purchase land in Rupert. The only record he left appears in the Proprietors' Clerk records where, on June 30, 1788, he filed a surveyor's report. In the report William states that he had surveyed 17 acres of land for Reuben Harmon in the Town of Rupert on the original right of Judah Weeks.

Notes begin on page 1393

The information about Benjamin Buell comes from a committee appointed by the Connecticut General Assembly in January 1789 to investigate the conduct of the New Haven mint. The committee filed a detailed report on the following April 9th. At the end of the report, the committee stated that Abel Buell, who owned one-eighth share of the mint operation, had gone to Europe. Before departing Buell had given his son, Benjamin, authorization to coin coppers, which he had just begun. It is unknown where Benjamin coined his coppers. But numismatists tentatively believe he produced the 1787 and 1788 dated Connecticut coppers which feature an obverse with a "Triple Leaves" mailed bust left effigy and a reverse where the seated figure holds a "Wheat Ear" (6).

Lawrence Wroth's biography of Abel Buell (note 2) does not mention that Buell had a son named William. This gave rise to a CNL Research Forum question, specifically RF-37, which asked "Did Abel Buell Actually Have a Son Named William?" (7). CNL editor, Jim Spilman, concludes RF-37 by asking "Is it possible that Benjamin and William Buell, considered as brothers, were actually the same individual?"

CNL patron, Edward R. Barnsley, answered RF-37 by saying that he could not see the slightest reason to postulate that Benjamin and William Buell were the same individual (8). But he did not offer conclusive evidence to support his stand. Recently, however, the author has uncovered new primary source information that proves Barnsley was correct.

In April 1791 William Buell purchased 20 acres of land from Dr. Jeremiah Durrand in Fair Haven, Vermont (9). Fair Haven is a small town in Rutland County, approximately 24 miles north of East Rupert. Shortly afterwards, in an advertisement in the "Vermont Gazette," dated May 30, 1791, William informed the public that he had set up a gold and silversmith, watchmaker and jewelry business near Colonel Matthew Lyon's iron works in Fair Haven (10). The ad states that William was from New Haven, Connecticut, which suggests he had returned to his home town after the Rupert mint halted operations in early 1789 (11). (A photo of the ad together with a transcription appears in Appendix A.)

Interestingly, William's move to Fair Haven and his location near Matthew Lyon's iron works may not have been by chance. Lyon, who was the leading business man in Fair Haven, was married to Abel Buell's niece, Beulah, a daughter of Vermont Governor Thomas Chittenden (12). Thus, this family connection is probably what attracted William to Fair Haven.

A few months later, both William and Benjamin Buell advertised in the same newspaper that they had established a button manufactory in Fair Haven. This ad, which is dated August 8, 1791, is proof-positive evidence that William and Benjamin were not the same person. The ad also proves that they were brothers because within the ad they stated "their father (among other matters) has been to Europe to obtain a knowledge of, namely, that of making the fashionable metal coat and vest buttons, of all kinds." (A photo of the ad together with a transcription appears in Appendix B.)

Lawrence Wroth concludes (note 2, p. 89) that Benjamin was the son of Abel and Mary Buell, while Albert Welles (note 4) states that William was born to Abel and his second wife, Aletta. Thus, William and Benjamin were half brothers and Benjamin was the older of the two by as much as nine years.

The preceding button manufactory ad postdates Abel Buell's return to America. With this information, we now know that Abel returned sometime before August 8, 1791 and that his stay in Europe was approximately two years. Also, if we believe his sons, Abel went to Europe primarily to learn the button trade, whereas others have suggested he went to flee the authorities (note 6, p. 131) or to secure copper for the mint (note 2, p. 24).

No additional button manufactory ads are found in the "Vermont Gazette," up to 1794. This may indicate that William and Benjamin's button manufactory failed early. Around this time, their father had established a cotton manufactory (note 2, p. 25) near New York City. Possibly Benjamin joined his father in this endeavor, but William remained in Fair Haven, Vermont. On Thursday April 4, 1793 William married Polly Baldwin, daughter of Captain Frederick Baldwin of Rutland, Vermont (13). Even later, in June 1796, William advertised in the "Fair Haven Telegraph" that he still carried on the gold and silversmith business.

One final observation. Chris Faulkner of Ottawa, Canada found that a William Buell, Loyalist from Connecticut, had founded the city of Brockville, Ontario in 1784 (14). This individual doesn't appear to be William Buell the coiner. Our William Buell was only 12 years old in 1784 and primary source information unquestionably places him in Rupert and Fair Haven, Vermont later in the century.

APPENDIX A

WILLIAM BUELL,
GOLD AND SILVER SMITH,
WATCHMAKER AND JEWELLER,
From Newhaven, in Connecticut.

HAS lately set up his business near col. Lyon's iron works, in Fairhaven, where he performs all kinds of work belonging in the above branches, with faithfulness, neatness and dispatch.

He makes and has for sale, silver, plated, and pinch-beck shoe and kneebuckles; jewels and necklaces; officers silver mounted hangers; horsemen's swords, pinchbeck mounted, and neatly gilt; plated bridle buckles and tips; with many other articles too numerous to mention - - all which he sells on the most reasonable terms, both as to price and mode of payment, and will make it his constant endeavor to serve and oblige his customers.

All orders will be punctually performed, and the smallest favors received with gratitude, by the public's humble servant,

WILLIAM BUELL

May 30, 1791.

WILLIAM BUELL,
GOLD AND SILVER SMITH,
WATCHMAKER AND JEWELLER,
From Newhaven, in Connecticut.

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All orders will be punctually performed, and the smallest favors received with gratitude, by the public's humble servant,

WILLIAM BUELL.

May 30, 1791.

APPENDIX B

FAIRHAVEN BUTTON MANUFACTORY.

WILLIAM AND BENJAMIN BUEL,

REQUEST the countenance and patronage of the public in general, and of the merchants of Vermont in particular, in business, their father (among other matters) has been to Europe to obtain a knowledge of, namely, that of making the fashionable metal coat and vest buttons, of all kinds. They can assure all that incline to become their customers, that if stock is to be had, they will be able to afford them buttons, of any pattern they wish for, on easier terms than they can be purchased in Newyork, by the same quantity.

They have set up the business next house to Squire Safford's tavern, in Fairhaven, where if the merchants will send their OLD PEWTER, COPPER and BRASS, they shall receive such buttons as they wish for, and as many, if not more, than their materials would purchase in Newyork. As their greatest apprehension is the want of stock, they earnestly hope the patriotism, as well as the interest of the merchant, will induce them to do all in their power with regard to the collection of old pewter, copper and brass, and that they will take the cheapest and most direct method to convey it to them, for which they will pay no doubt to the satisfaction of the persons taking that trouble; and where any person is inclined to furnish them with considerable stock, they will let them have a larger quantity of buttons than it pays for — taking the remainder in merchant's goods or produce.

The GOLD AND SILVER SMITH, AND WATCH-MAKING business, is carried on by W'm Buel, at the same place, as usual.

Fairhaven, August 8, 1791.

FAIRHAVEN BUTTON MANUFACTORY.

WILLIAM AND BENJAMIN BUEL,

REQUEST the countenance and patronage of the public in general, and of the merchants of Vermont in particular, in business, their father (among other matters) has been to Europe to obtain a knowledge of, namely, that of making the fashionable metal coat and vest buttons, of all kinds. They can assure all that incline to become their customers, that if stock is to be had, they will be able to afford them buttons, of any pattern they wish for, on easier terms than they can be purchased in Newyork, by the same quantity.

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The GOLD AND SILVER SMITH, AND WATCH-MAKING business, is carried on by W'm. BUEL, at the same place, as usual.

Fairhaven, August 8, 1791.

21f.

NOTES

- (1). Crosby, Sylvester S. *The Early Coins of America*, 1875, pp. 188-189.
- (2). Wroth, Lawrence C. *Abel Buell of Connecticut*, 1958, pp. 3-4.
- (3). Sipsey, Everett T. "New Facts and Ideas on the State Coinages," *The Colonial Newsletter*, October 1964.
- (4). Welles, Albert. *The History of the Buell Family*, 1881.
- (5). Hibbard, George S. *Rupert, Vermont: Historical and Descriptive 1761-1899*, 1899, p. 156.
- (6). Breen, Walter. "Legal and Illegal Connecticut Mints, 1785-1789," *Studies on Money in Early America*, 1976, pp. 131-133.
- (7). *The Colonial Newsletter*, September 1972, p. 369.
- (8). Barnsley, Edward R. "Abel Buell's Sons," *The Colonial Newsletter*, June 1974, pp. 444-445.
- (9). Carlise, Lilian B. *Vermont Clock, Watchmakers, Silversmiths and Jewelers*, 1970, p. 85.
- (10). The *Vermont Gazette* was published in Bennington, Vermont by Anthony Haswell.
- (11). Bressett, Kenneth E. "Vermont Copper Coinage," *Studies on Money in Early America*, 1976, p. 177.
- (12). Crockett, Walter H. *Vermont: The Green Mountain State*, 1921, Volume 2, p. 554.
- (13). A notice of their marriage appeared in the April 8, 1793 issue of *The Farmer's Library*, a newspaper published in Rutland, Vermont.
- (14). Faulkner, Chris. "A Lead on William Buell?," *The Colonial Newsletter*, March 1990, p. 1151.



**THE CURRENT LOCATION
of
THE NEW JERSEY WHAT'SIT**

from Dennis P. Wierzba, New Providence, NJ
(TN-102B)

As a New Jersey collector, I was fascinated by the Spiro/Picker "fourth" head left variety as illustrated in the CNL, p. 910. I jumped at the chance, last year, to purchase this piece from the Tom Rinaldo collection - - even sharing the same emotions as Jacob Spiro at his time of purchase (see Editor's Comments, TN-102A, CNL, p. 918). As noted in the Editor's Comments, this amazing alteration had appeared to have been lost from the hobby. To complete the provenance from Richard Picker, Tom Rinaldo purchased this piece from the July 22, 1992 Coin Galleries sale, unappreciated in bulk lot 2577. The lot description mentions that Richard Picker believed this to be the work of Smith of Anne (sic) Street.

The metrology is as follows: 121.43 grains, 28.8mm in diameter, perfect medal or book turn. The obverse is graded as a glossy brown AU with the D reverse graded Very Good, but an unusual early die state with no trace of any break by the shield point. A key point, not documented earlier, is the book turn, i.e., the horse head was upside-down before the NOVA CAESAREA, head left, plow and 1788 were created anew from the 6 obverse.

As mentioned in TN-102A, a similarly altered head left NJ, lot 446, was plated in the Parmelee Collection sale of June 1890. This alteration kept the legend and date of the 14-J, but turned the head and plow. The style of the head, the eye and plow suggest the same hand as the NJ What'sit. Lot 446 sold for \$2.20. By way of comparison, two 50-f's in fine, one double struck, sold for \$2.75 and a lot of 14 56-n's, good to very fine, sold for 22 cents. This coin presently resides in the collection of CNL Patron William Anton, Jr..

The Parmelee lot description makes reference to Crosby, p.286. To quote Crosby, "For the purposes of imposing 'rare varieties' upon collectors, some unprincipled person has altered New Jersey coins of 1786 and 1787, by engraving, or otherwise changing the facing of the horse's head, and in one instance, the plough also, from right to left. No coin, having in its original condition the head to the left, and the date 1786, or 1787, has come to our knowledge." [The Early Coins of America. Sylvester S. Crosby, 1983 Quarterman reprint].

The NJ What'sit clearly takes the coin engraver's art to a higher level. As far as dating this coin, Crosby compiled his manuscript between 1869 and 1872, with publication in the 1873 to 1875 period. Perhaps the engraver learned from the Crosby book that the head left varieties are only dated 1788. This would place the date of the alteration in the late 1870's, although possibly done in the 1860's. I know of no reference by Maris to this "new variety" nor of his expected condemnation of this type of alteration.

As far as Picker's attribution to Smith of Ann Street, CNL Patron Peter Smith's research has never turned up any reference to Smith retooling any NJ copper. Apparently there were other high quality coin engravers who never attained the "fame" of Smith of Ann Street [private correspondence, Peter Smith, 6/27/93].

More on that "Blank Planchet"

by
Gary A. Trudgen
(TN-145B)

Shortly after my comments were published in CNL 93 (page 1369, TN-145A) concerning the apparent residual letters on Pete Boisvert's "Blank Planchet," he sent it to me for examination. For background information, Pete informed me that he had acquired the copper disk from a big junk lot of unpriced colonials off of a Bid Board and that this lot had been untouched since the 1940s. Also, he graciously stated that I could apply a surface treatment, such as Care, to the disk to enhance viewing of the surface detail.

First, I verified the "Blank Planchet" statistics that Jim Spilman published on page 1302 of CNL. Next, I examined the surface under various lighting, viewing angles, magnification, and surface treatment. The apparent legend letters are found on the side of the disk with the crack-like ridge, as shown in the left photo on CNL page 1302. When looking at the photo a fragmentary string of four letters, which follow the circumference, can be seen to the left of the crack. The string of letters appears to be either CTOR or GIOR. If the string is CTOR, then this could be part of the legend AUCTORI, which is Latin for "By authority of." AUCTORI was used in the obverse legends of Vermont and Connecticut coppers. In addition, 180° around the circumference and on the same side of the disk, there is a possible string of three other letters. These letters are very difficult to distinguish, but they may be BAS. Noticeably, however, these three letters don't fit in with the possible AUCTORI legend. Also, I measured a 26mm diameter across the disk from the tops of the opposite letter strings. And I found no further evidence of other letters or design features on either side of the disk.

The preceding observations seem to only add to the mystery of the "Blank Planchet." If these apparent strings of letters are truly the remains of a coin legend, then how do we account for what appears to be hammering of the surfaces prior to when the blank was cut? (An examination of the edge of the disk shows no uneven outward expansion which should have occurred if the disk was hammered after it was cut.) The only explanation I can come up with is that a well worn copper coin was hammered and then recut for some purpose other than colnage. Let's hear from you technical sleuths out there. What other thoughts and explanations can you offer? Let's solve this mystery!

Patron Dale Trotter has already offered his observations. They are as follows: "I received CNL #93 and found it excellent as usual. I looked back on the photos of the 'Blank Planchet' after reading Gary Trudgen's letter. Could that be the bottom curl of a "C", the foot of a "T" and an "O" before the "R"? If so, this appears to be part of AUCTORI. What appears as the foot of the "T" and the "R" both have the same shape "cleft" foot. The weight is well within Connecticut copper range."

The "cleft" foot, which Dale mentions, is an important observation. The letter punches that were employed to prepare coinage dies did not use split serifs, instead they used straight serifs. But the cleft can occur during striking, due to a phenomenon known as bifurcation. Many 18th century coppers were struck without retaining collars. Therefore, when the dies impacted the planchet during striking, it was possible that a considerable outward flow of metal could occur from the planchet center. The amount of flow was dependent upon striking pressure and planchet hardness. The impression near the edge of the planchet could be carried outward by this metal flow. If the metal flow was great enough, it split the bottom horizontal serifs of the legend letters, carrying each side of the serif outward and creating a cleft foot. Thus, Dale's observation provides additional support to the theory that the "Blank Planchet" started life as a copper coin.

“Oh, What Tangled Webs We Mortals Weave...”

The Story of the N.J. Head Left Coppers

from

Michael Hodder; Wolfboro, NH

(TN-155)

The three New Jersey varieties with the horse's head facing left, Maris 49-f, 50-f, and 51-g, have always stood out as exceptional in the series. They are the only ones that were struck from obverses whose major design element violated the norm for New Jersey coppers. Because they were so different from the other New Jersey dies numismatic historians have tried to find some special significance in them, some particular reason for why they were made.

The common belief is that Thomas Goadsby struck the Head Left varieties. In support of this belief some writers have pointed to several pieces of evidence. First, the writ of execution obtained by Goadsby against Albion Cox's goods and chattels on November 6, 1787, giving Goadsby control of the Rahway Mint. Second, the writ of replevin Cox obtained on January 29, 1788, ordering that the goods and chattels seized by Goadsby in November be returned to Cox .

On the strength of this evidence the story of the Head Left varieties is usually told like this. Cox owed Goadsby large sums of money advanced to keep the Rahway Mint in operation. When Goadsby demanded payment Cox was revealed to be bankrupt. Goadsby obtained a writ against him, Cox was thrown into debtor's prison, and Goadsby took over the mint. Late in 1787 or during the early months of 1788 Goadsby struck the Head Left coppers on his own, using the Rahway Mint's equipment. The unique nature of the obverse design was deliberately chosen to distinguish Goadsby's coppers from those struck earlier at Rahway. After Cox obtained his own writ at the end of January Goadsby was forced to vacate the Rahway Mint sometime during February, 1788, and coining of the Head Left coppers ceased.

This is a nice story. It fits the evidence given above and offers a tidy explanation for the distinctive Head Left design. Unfortunately, it is incomplete. New historical evidence, which has not been published before, paints a very different picture of what happened at the Rahway Mint while Goadsby and Cox were fighting each other in court.

The January 29, 1788 writ of replevin that returned Cox's goods and chattels to him, ordered by Governor Livingston acting as Chancellor, was addressed to Essex County High Sheriff Caleb Camp. It stated that the items to be returned included “Two Iron Cutting Presses one pair of Rollers Twelve Ingots for Casting Copper Six Hundred Wait of Blanks for making Copper pence & Sixty Ingots of Copper and one Coining Press...” These items represented Rahway's stock in trade and were all the basic materials and equipment necessary for a mint.

The day after it issued Sheriff Camp executed the Chancellor's writ of replevin against Goadsby. We can assume that he sealed the doors against Goadsby's further entry. Ten days later he legally

returned to Cox the items he found at the Rahway Mint in Goadsby's possession. Matthias Ogden, acting on Cox' behalf as his bondsman, gave Sheriff Camp a receipt for them on February 9, 1788.

The receipt read as follows:

"Received at Rahway Mills February 9th 1788 from Caleb Camp Esquire high Sheriff of the county of Essex two Iron Cutting presses, one pair of Rollers twelve Ingot Moulds for casting copper, four hundred and ninety four blanks for making Copper-pence, fifty seven Ingots, part of sixty Ingots of Copper, taken from Mr. Thomas Goadsby on the thirtieth day of January seventeen hundred and eighty eight at said Mills, by virtue of a writ of replevin against him at the suit of Albion Cox tested the twenty ninth day of said month and returnable on the first Tuesday in April then next before the Justices of the Supreme Court of Judicature for the State of New Jersey at Trenton in said State
M Ogden"

These items represented everything sheriff Camp found in Goadsby's possession at the Rahway Mint. A comparison of the items listed in the writ of replevin and those Ogden receipted for shows that some things ordered to be returned on January 29 were not found in Rahway 10 days later. They included three ingots of copper and the difference between the 600 lbs. of planchets mentioned in the writ and the 494 planchets actually returned. What had happened to the ingots and the nearly 28,000 planchets? More importantly, where was the coining press? It was listed in the writ of replevin but was not among the items signed for by Ogden.

It appears that Goadsby transported Rahway's coining press, the three missing ingots, and the planchets ready for colning to Walter Mould's mint at Morristown. On Friday, February 1 1788 William Leddel, one of Mould's partners in the Morristown operation, wrote the following letter addressed to Walter Mould:

"W Mold
Sir

I have informed Mr Camp the Property shall be within call at his command on Saturday and he Assures me no new Process shall interfere with Trial but a fair and Candid Decision shall take place, and its Consequences be duly Executed. Shall be with you this Evening in the mean Time am Sir

Your Most Obt Sevt
Wm Leddel
Friday Evening"

Below the body of the letter was a post scriptum in Leddels' hand, signed by Matthias Ogden:

"Col Ogden agrees that no new process shall issue on account of the property, either of replevin or Certiorari if brought tomorrow to Chatham.
M Ogden"

The next day, Saturday, February 2 1788, Caleb Camp presided over a sheriff's trial between Cox and Goadsby. The hearing was held in Timothy Day's Tavern, located east of the stone bridge in Chatham on the turnpike between Morristown and Elizabethtown, very near the Morris and Essex county line. Day billed Camp for expenses incurred in connection with the trial and received a receipt from Camp reading "Recd ye 2th of february 1788 of calib Camp Esqr 22/6 for Expenses him Self and Juriers Between Alben Cox and Thomas Goadsbe. Rec'd by me Timothy Day."

The "property" referred to by Leddel and Ogden in their letter to Mould was the object of disputed possession between Cox and Goadsby. The timing of the letter and trial, coming just days after the Chancellor's writ of replevin was awarded, suggests that the property and the trial of its disposition were objects of the Chancellor's writ. The reference to no new process issuing "...of replevin..." proves that the matter at hand was part and parcel of the replevin Cox had won in January. Could the "property" have been Rahway's missing coining press and the copper ingots and blanks?

In 1792, four years after the trial at Day's Tavern, Goadsby sued Camp. Goadsby claimed that Camp had failed to seize and sell enough of Cox's personal property to satisfy the November 6, 1787 writ Goadsby had won against Cox. Goadsby held Camp personally responsible for the failure. Camp and his attorney, Matthias Williamson, made notes of all expenses Camp had incurred in connection with the various writs he had served, as part of their defense in mitigation of possible damages. Among these notes was an unfinished one in Camp's handwriting which read:

"To costs and damages in procuring the Copper and works caried to Morris Town £20.
Int on 20-0 from Jan 1788"

The copper referred to must have been the three ingots and the 600 lbs of finished blanks that were not returned to Ogden on February 9 because they were not found at Rahway. The works mentioned can only have been the coining press, since the cutting presses, rollers and ingot moulds had never left Rahway.

A final piece of evidence in this puzzle is another receipt given to Camp by Ogden which stated:

"Rec'd ElizthTown 3rd March 1788 of Caleb Camp Esq^r three ingots of copper being the remainder in full of the articles taken from Mr. Goadsby by a writ of replevin & those not delivered & receipted for before.

M. Ogden"

This receipt is dated a month after the jury trial at Chatham. It also specifically referred to the Chancellor's writ of replevin as the authority for the receipt. It acknowledged that by March everything ordered to be returned to Cox in January had finally been received on his behalf. Although none of the Ogden-Camp receipts specifically mention the coining press we know from the June, 1788 Rule of Reference that it was then back in Rahway, so it must have been returned earlier. It is possible that a receipt for the press at one time existed but has since been misplaced or lost. The most likely time for the return was shortly following the February 2 jury trial in Chatham.

From this newly published evidence it appears that the story of the Head Left coppers is somewhat more complicated than has been supposed. At the beginning of the first week of November, 1787 Goadsby took possession of the Rahway Mint and its equipment according to the writ he obtained against Cox. In December he moved the coining press, three ingots of copper, and nearly 28,000 finished blanks to Mould's Morristown Mint, leaving everything else behind in Rahway. Late in January, 1788 Rahway's press was removed from Morristown to Chatham and early in February it was returned to the Rahway Mint. By March the missing three ingots of copper had also been returned. The 28,000 blanks still remained unaccounted for.

If Goadsby was really responsible for the Head Left coppers they could only have been struck in Morristown, not Rahway. But if he were, why would he need to incur the expense of shipping a heavy press and the other items over wintry roads to Morristown? Camp charged £20 costs and

damages to carry them only part of the distance between Morristown and Rahway. Leaving the press in Rahway, where all the other heavy machinery needed for a mint was already in place, would have been more practical if Goadsby wanted to coin coppers for his own account and profit. It is true that Goadsby had legal possession of the Rahway Mint from November 6, 1787 to January 29, 1788. It is also true that the Head Left coppers are very distinctive in design. It is not necessarily true that these two facts point to Goadsby as the author of Maris 49-f, 50-f, and 51-g.

We commonly assume that, since the Mould-Cox-Goadsby partnership was dissolved by November 22, 1786, it must have ended bitterly and there were no further business relations between Cox and Goadsby on the one hand, and Mould on the other. From the foregoing it appears that there were, but we do not know much about them. For some reason Goadsby decided to ship Rahway's press to Mould, along with finished blanks and copper ingots. Being a businessman, Goadsby must have had some idea that a practical purpose was served in doing so. Perhaps he felt that Mould's operation could benefit from having a second press and a fresh supply of finished blanks? Perhaps he felt that he could make a profit from his action even after the expenses of shipping the press by road had been offset? We do not know exactly why he acted as he did, and we probably never will. We do know, however, that the Head Left coppers could not have been coined in the Rahway Mint while Goadsby controlled the facility, because there was no coining press there to strike them on.

What became of the nearly 28,000 finished blanks that Goadsby shipped to Morristown in December, 1787? There is no evidence to tell us what happened to them. Could they have been used as planchet stock at the Morristown Mint? Since they were Rahway planchets they would have been punched out by the Rahway planchet cutters. We know that Rahway's coins are smaller in diameter than Morristown's. Are there any Morristown varieties that come on smaller than usual flans?

The obvious candidates are the small planchet Maris 64-t's. This variety is known on large and small flans, the former typical of the usual Morristown diameter, the latter very atypical. Perhaps in the small flan 64-t's we are seeing some of the Rahway planchet stock Goadsby shipped to Mould? Are there any other candidates? The later die states of obverse 6, primarily in combination with reverse D, are found on flans noticeably smaller than the earlier states of 6-D and most 6-C seen. Perhaps these were also struck on Rahway planchet stock.

No mention of dies was made in the writ of replevin or Ogden's various receipts for returned Rahway materials. Could any of Rahway's dies have also been shipped to Mould? The documentary evidence does not tell us. The coins offer suggestive hints. The later states of Maris 37-X, 37-Y, 37-f, 48-g, 48-f, 49-f, and 50f (including all but one of the Head Left varieties) are found on broad flans like Morristown's coins, while the earlier states are found on typical Rahway diameter flans. The later state coins could be candidates for Rahway dies on Morristown flans. I suggested in my cataloguing of the Henry Garrett Collection (Bowers and Merena, March 26, 1992) that some Maris 48-f, 49-f, and 50-f, were struck at the Rahway Mint on Morristown flans. The new evidence presented above shows that I got this backwards! I should really have written that they could have been struck at the Morristown Mint on Morristown flans but using Rahway dies! This just goes to show that numismatic research is as much art as science and that no one has written the final word on New Jersey's coppers!

Bibliographical Note

Caleb Camp was Essex County High Sheriff during the period when New Jersey coppers were being struck. As sheriff, he was responsible for serving all writs, empanelling juries, executing

judgements, and managing the common gaol in Newark. His actions as sheriff were carefully scrutinized and failure to carry out his lawful duties could leave him open to suits both civil and criminal. Therefore, like all sheriffs of his time, he kept very detailed records of the writs he served, the outcomes of the trials they initiated, and his expenses in connection with his duties. Most of the original documents quoted in this paper were among the Caleb Camp Family papers formerly in the possession of the New Jersey Historical Society.

At the same time that he was writing his Fugio cents manuscript Damon Douglas was studying New Jersey coppers. He intended to publish a history of the coinage but, along with the Fugio study, was unable to complete his work before his death in 1974. In the course of his research on New Jersey coppers Douglas saw the Caleb Camp documents and transcribed some of them. Douglas also noted the NJHS library's classification numbers for each document. Douglas' transcriptions and notes about the Camp papers were preserved at the American Numismatic Society, together with the NJHS library call numbers.

Despite several careful searches during 1989-1990 the Camp papers could not be found in the NJHS library; their card file listings were also missing. It appears likely that someone who recognized their importance removed both the Camp papers and what he thought were the only records of their existence, the NJHS library card file listings. The present whereabouts of these important documents are presently unknown. Should they ever surface they will be easily identified.

Michael Hodder

from ye Editor

Over the years ye Editor has personally encountered a number of very similar problems of missing papers, or books, or documents, or even dies and coins from specialized collections. Unfortunately, it is not an uncommon problem. In ye Editor's case persistence paid off and a number of missing items were located and returned to their place within the collections. In at least two cases the custodians did not realize that the items were absent. There is actually little wonder that, today, anyone who desires to research an area within the historical documents collections around our Nation finds a considerably less than cordial welcome when he expresses his interest to those in charge of the collections.

In a recent discussion with the Head Librarian of a large University I was told that the problem of theft was so bad that they did not even want to discuss the details, but that with the application of new technological devices such as computerized cardfiles, video recording and alarm tags, the problem has been considerably reduced in scope. JCS

ASK the EDITORS

AE-1 The Stepney Hoard

We have received some additional information on AE-1 The Stepney Hoard from Eric P. Newman of St. Louis Missouri - - -

The answer of editor Michael J. Hodder to the question about the contents of the Stepney or Fairfield Hoard indicated that there were no Machins pieces in the group. (CNL July 1993, p. 1372) That comment was probably caused by my own ambiguity about 35 years ago. I had stated that there were 72 counterfeit British and Irish halfpence in the Hoard. This was before Machins pieces were listed. Hodder reasonably interpreted this as meaning counterfeit British and Irish made halfpence whereas I meant counterfeit British and Irish style halfpence.

The 72 counterfeit British and Irish style halfpence in the hoard were sent to me on approval by Walter Breen when he was working for Stack's. I selected 10 or 12 pieces at \$5 to \$10 each and returned the balance. These prices seemed enormous to me at the time, but among the pieces I bought were the 1776 Machins featured in "The Vermont Numismatic Enigma" (Vlack 9-76B); a 1778 Machins uncirculated red brown (11-78A); a 1787 uncirculated red brown (19-87C); a 1787 uncirculated some red (17-87A); a 1788 uncirculated red brown (23-88A); and perhaps a 1787 uncirculated full red (20-87C). I do not remember the date of purchase but could go mining in my files to try to find out if that becomes of interest. It had to be before my 1958 "Enigma" article and even could have been before Breen's 1952 Hoard article.

Ned Barnsley in his 1962 comment on the pieces in the Hoard was correct about Machins pieces being present. Although

he used the word "Bungtowns" instead of "evasions" that was then customary. I tried to define the meaning of the word "Bungtown" in 1976.

This all shows how continual research and writing can add to accuracy.

Eric P. Newman

from ye Editor

Mr. Newman's comments regarding the condition of his specimens plus the comments of Mike Hodder in the previous issue that "Some collectors have questioned whether there ever was a find of colonial era coppers near Stepney, CT." brings to mind an observation made by Ned Barnsley to me many years ago. Ned's belief was that the "Stepney Hoard was a fraud."

This harsh judgement was based, he told me, on his opinion that no matter how well protected, no copper coins could have survived being buried in a barnyard for 162 years and still retain the pristine surface condition exhibited by many of the specimens!

There can be no doubt that the Stepney Hoard was in fact a remarkable accumulation of early American coppers uncovered at a time when none of them had any significant monetary value in the numismatic marketplace. Whether or not the source of the specimens "beneath a Stepney barn" is accurate will never be known with certainty!

JCS

The following are two additional inputs on AE-3 and AE-6 from Associate Editor Mike Hodder.

AE-3. What happened to Hall's collection of Connecticut's?

After working recently with Hillyer Ryder's collection of Connecticut's perhaps I can shed some more light on the problem of the disposition of Hall's collection. Hall's own notebooks include an inventory listing of

his collection of Connecticut by variety. The inventory seems to have been done circa 1898, by which time Hall had about 300 coins. Hall also noted how many different specimens of each variety he had seen, the total being about 2,000 in all. Brand bought 356 Connecticut, probably Hall's mainline collection intact. The Connecticut State Library was given 126 Connecticut by Matthew Shumway in 1919, said to have been Hall's, together with the Hall notebooks. There are Connecticut coppers known with Hall attributions painted on their edges, and others with Hall numbers painted on their obverses. I suspect that those with edge painting are ex Hall's mainline collection, the others possibly being pieces he once owned but later traded or sold, or else they were coins he attributed for friends. There are, for example, 160 Connecticut in the Ryder collection, pedigreed back to Dr. Hall, many of which were purchased from Elder's 1920 Miller sale. Some have edge painted attributions, others have obverse painted Hall numbers, some have neither. Some of these were, undoubtedly, in Hall's mainline collection at one time. It seems to me that Hall's name was "magic" then as now and, if a coin had passed through Hall's hands, even if only for attribution or recording its variety, it was ascribed to his "collection". The problem of exactly which particular Connecticut were actually in Hall's first collection is still unsettled. We need to compare the conditions of edge painted coins to the condition notes in Hall's notebooks, to see if any correlations are possible. We need to record the number of edge painted coins known per variety and compare that with the number Hall wrote he owned in his first collection. We also need to be sure that there are no faux Hall coins floating around! **MJH**

AE-6 "Money Changers" - - How were Confederation era coppers distributed (raised by Phil Mossman in his answer to AE-6.)

For some years I've been working on the problem of how the private minters of

Connecticut, New Jersey's, and Vermont's got their coins into circulation. After a lot of thought, and finding absolutely no contemporary evidence, I've come to the conclusion that we may never know for sure. However, here are my best guesses. I suspect that the minters sold their coins wholesale, by the barrel-load, to jobbers who could move the coppers to grocers, local doctors and lawyers (i.e., then, as now, society's elite), and wholesale distributors of hardware and other finished goods. For New Jersey's, I suspect that there was a wholesale market selling to those who had bills to pay the state, which accepted the coppers at a very favorable rate for just such transactions. I don't imagine a long line of customers at the back doors of the mints waiting for their shiny new coppers to be coined (although a precedent for just this can be found at the US Mint later when small cents were finally coined during the Civil War!). Maybe one part of Goadsby's job was to move coppers into circulation? Neither Mould, Cox, nor Ogden were familiar with business as a profession. If I'm right in my guess, then the profits accruing to the minters would necessarily be much lower than has been postulated in the past. **MJH**

Here is a new inquiry from CNL Patron Donald G. Robinson of West Brookfield, MA:

AE-7 Die Orientation of London Elephant Tokens

Recently I bought a London elephant token (thick planchet) sight-unseen at auction. After receiving the piece I was somewhat surprised to note that the die axis is 360° (medal turn).

Is this orientation normal for the type? If so—since this is a deviation from the norm for the vast majority of colonials—why isn't this fact mentioned in reference books?

AE-7 Mike Hodder and Gary Trudgen

both reply that medal turn seems to be normal for the reverse orientations of elephant tokens of all kinds, including London, Carolina, and New England.

Axis measurements aren't usually recorded or mentioned in the standard texts on early American coins. Luckily, the cataloguer of the Norweb Collection specimens did note this parameter for each of the 11 tokens in that sale (October, 1987, lots 1227-1237). Measurements taken showed axes for all in the 355-15 degree range, fairly regular medal turn. There were no obvious distinctions visible between thick or thin planchet stocks, nor between London and Carolina or New England varieties.

So, it appears that medal turn may well be the norm for these. In fact, if you're ever offered an elephant token whose reverse is **not** so oriented, you might want to insist upon authentication before buying it!

And here is another new inquiry from Bill Snyder of Cookville, TN

AE-8 Spanish Crowns with NE Countermarks

Writing about Massachusetts silver (EARLY AMERICAN COINS), Mr. Robert Vlack says: "A point to mention is that on October 8, 1672, NE dies were authorized to have been used to counterstamp other coinage for circulation in the Colonies to indicate they were of full weight and good silver, but no coins are available to prove this act was put into effect. "

There are at least 3 coins available.

**The first piece in the
Hans M. F. Schulman auction.
April 1951**

The first piece, lot # 9, in a large collection of Spain crowns) was described as "Philip III 1598-1617, Same 1617 Seville Modern Round Style EXF. Counterstamped NE as on New England Coins (plate)".

(There must have been a misprint, as the plate clearly shows the aqueduct mint mark of Segovia, not Seville).

This Spanish coin appeared again in a Coin Galleries auction in November, 1990. This time, it was included with Colonial copies. Mr. Richard Picker before his death, had written "authenticity questionable and not guaranteed" on the holder of what was to be lot #2548. The cataloger added "Possibly a collector creation of the 19th Century. "

**The second piece also in the
Hans M. F. Schulman auction.
April 1951**

The second NE piece in the Schulman auction was lot 201 "Bolivia (Potosi Mint) Phil. IV 1621-1665 - 1659 Pillars - CSPD. NE (Plate) EXF (30.00)"

(The plates show both coins with what appear to be identical raised, linked block letters (NE) within a 1/4" circular cartouche).

**The third piece is in the
Henry Christensen Auction.
December, 1975**

"Charles II, lot 572 POTOSI. 8 R. 1667 E.. 26.675 grams. Very Fine+, Full Round,

pierced at 3:00, and with an NE c/m on obverse in 2nd quarter of shield. The NE c/m is of unknown origin. Burzio refers it on a piece from Potosi dated 1659 and offered in a Hans Schulman auction, April 1951, lot No. 201. Even without this c/m this 1667 piece should bring (750.00-1000.00)."

(The countermark shown is very similar to those on the first two coins. The Christensen photo, however, is not quite sharp, so it is hard to be sure that all 3 coins were impressed with the same punch).

Questions - -

- (1) Can anyone shed more light on these pieces?
- (2) Are there more?
- (3) Does the NE signify something in Spain or Bolivia
i.e. - have nothing to do with Massachusetts)?
- (4) Did some 19th century entrepreneur make a NE stamp? Where is it, and where did he find two hundred year old, high grade crowns?

**AE-8
Reply
from Phil Mosman**

There is a fourth piece with such a counterstamp in the A.N.S. collection. It is on a very nice 1663 Potosi eight reales but the "NE" counterstamp looks like a modern day fabrication. It is just too "clean"

This piece will be illustrated in Chapter three of my book and I'm sorry that I do not have an individual picture to send you. My comment is that this represents a fake counterstamp on a genuine coin. It would be interesting to compare all four stamps to see if they are the same. **PLM**

**AE-8
Reply
from Mike Hoedder**

Spanish crowns with NE counterstamps. These are all frauds!! None are genuine! I haven't yet seen one with an NE punch that corresponds to any of those found on the regular issue coins.

Check out Strobridge's sale of the Clay Collection (1871), lots 72, 73, and 75. The last is a Noe-1 Pine shilling with an NE counterstamp at the base of the obverse. It appeared later in Mehl's sale of November, 1954, where Mrs. Norweb bought it. I catalogued it as lot 1192 of the Norweb sale. Yes, someone had made one or more NE punches in the 19th century and created interesting pieces for collectors.

Yes, high quality Spanish 17th and 18th century crowns were available for this purpose then and their values sold as "NE" issues would have been higher than without the fabricated counterstamps.

Hope this helps a bit.

MJH

The Editorial Roundtable

Our sincere thanks to CNL Patron Andrew W. Pollock III of Wolfeboro Falls, NH for his donation to the CNL Library of a copy of his new reprint of *John Hull, A Builder of the Bay Colony*, by Hermann Frederick Clarke. John Hull is, of course, best known to numismatists as the proprietor of the 17th century mint where the pine tree shillings were manufactured. He was also, however, a leading colonial silversmith, merchant, and magistrate. Clarke explores all these aspects of Hull's life in detail. The original

edition of five hundred copies, published in 1940, was distributed mostly to those having an interest in early American silverware and 17th-century colonial history. Pollock's 1993 reprint is quality hardbound, and has 223 pages and 16 plates. Copies are available for \$37.50 postpaid from Pollock's Books, 290 High Street, Duxbury, MA 02332.

As ye Editor browsed through this very interesting book he encountered a paragraph on page 33 which is of particular interest considering the "shortages" of coin, especially silver, in those days! It is reprinted below:

JOHN HULL text Page 33

"During the first decade of the life of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the population increased apace as substantial numbers of Englishmen took part in the "Great Migration." The newcomers, well supplied with money, exchanged it for cattle and products of the soil with those who had preceded them, and became established. The Colony flourished and grew rich during a decade of prosperity, which in turn was followed by the economic crisis of 1640-1641, the result of the cessation of immigration. After this crisis came the growth of an extensive commercial intercourse with the West Indies, the Canaries, and the countries of Southern Europe, as well as the Mother Country. The merchants and sea captains brought back coin of all descriptions and ingots of silver from the Spanish Main. Prosperity returned, the aesthetic desire began to express itself, and the stage was thus set for the colonial silversmith to introduce the craft in colonial America. The influx of foreign silver coin provided the raw material. Those who came into possession of

the metal sought to have it fashioned into articles for the adornment of their homes, which in the decade from 1640 to 1650 began to contain many of the luxuries to which some of the Puritans had been accustomed before leaving England. Silver converted into beakers, tankards, or porringers did not corrode or depreciate; also, these articles were not so easily stolen as coin or bullion. The silversmith was somewhat akin to the banker of today, and John Hull, in adopting the craft of a silversmith, took the first step towards his diversified career of silversmith, merchant, mint-master, and banker, as well as valued and honored public servant."

JCS

Here are some comments by Mike Hodder on **TN-131A** (page 1385) in the previous issue:

I compared my database listings against Phil Mossman's tabulations of the most commonly seen Confederation era coppers and I find some agreement and some differences. Like Phil, I find the single most common coin in my lists is 1787 NJ Maris 56-n; I now count 154 pieces. The next in line is M. 64-t, with 83 listed; then come M. 46-e, 76 coins; 1787 CT Miller 4-L with 69; and M.33.7-r.2, with 46 pieces. I think Phil and I agree that the same varieties are in the "most common" category. Where we differ in the order of ranking is to be explained by the fact that I stopped recording 4-L's unless they were either in outstanding condition (fairly common) or an unusual die state (very rare). I would reverse his order for CT 33.7-r.2 and the NJ varieties

46-e (Rahway) and 64-t (Morristown, the smaller ones on Rahway stock). This is really nit-picking, however. Phil's point is well taken: there are several CT and NJ varieties that make up a disproportionately large percentage of the total number of all surviving state coppers. Phil and I have discussed this before. He first suggested that the robustness of M.56-n, its long and very hard life, needs some special explanation. **MJH**

And, in addition, some thoughts regarding Gary Trudgen's concepts in **TN-151A** (page 1387):

Gary's provisos about the many parameters that can affect how a punch shape looks on a struck coin are well done. However, I have difficulty knowing how a researcher is to be able to distinguish with precision between the same punch applied differently from different punches applied the same way! The enlarged plates in my CNL study of the 1787 Immunis Columbia and the so-called Atlee broken A suggested to some readers, not unskilled in their die varieties, that maybe more than one A punch was involved! Clearly, with this kind of uncertainty, due to the factors Gary so ably outlined, perhaps we should re-think punch linkages as sure numismatic evidence?

Patrons may be aware that I am extremely skeptical of the single punch set owned by one itinerant die sinker theory. In this regard, Peter Gaspar has recently written a study (in *Metallurgy in Numismatics*, v.33 that shows that identical letter and number punches were mass produced from identical matrices in the mints of London, Edinburgh, France, and possibly Spain starting in the late 17th century. Craig, in his history of the Royal Mint, wrote that in London mass production of identical punches was the norm from 1700, onwards. It's my belief that the punch links we have been finding across different coin series are really only evi-

dence of a single source for mass produced punches, possibly a New York City importer who bought his supply wholesale in London or Birmingham, maybe Paris, and sold sets here in America. This latter theory needs work. However, the facts that mass production of coin die punches was the norm in Europe's biggest mints; and that American silver and goldsmiths routinely bought their punches from London sellers; suggest to me that coin die punches were also bought from London sources and were mass produced. If typography is any parallel, complete sets of letters and numerals were sold. **MJH**

...and from ye Editor:

There seems to be a very basic problem of misunderstanding among most numismatists with whom, over the years, I have discussed the subject of coinage punches. The best way to illustrate this problem, I believe, is to ask two questions as follow -
- if you were to go to the hardware store, today, and purchase an ordinary set of the steel letter punches that are readily available in several sizes, could you use them to (question 1) punch the lettering into a coinage die? Or - (question 2) could you use them to sink a mold for the casting of printing type?

Well - - are your answers YES or NO? Ye Editor will continue this discussion in the next issue. Replies to these two questions will be appreciated from our Patrons. **JCS**

ODDS and ENDS

The "New Jersey" 14-J of 1788 mentioned in the previous issue should have been reported as Massachusetts 14-J of 1788! Sorry for the typo; ye Editor somehow converted "New Ryder 14-J" into "New Jersey 14-J". This extremely rare "Fat Indian" specimen, now the fourth known, was plated and described in Lot 1116 of Stack's Public Auction Sale of September 8,9, 1993 where it realized a hammer price of \$3,800.00. **JCS**